

Spokesworker is an occasional ("roughly monthly") news sheet, with stop-press news of forthcoming events, and of road, traffic and planning matters. It is not automatically sent to all members. A copy is enclosed if we are writing to you anyway, and copies are handed out at working group meetings. You can make sure to get a copy by sending us 10 or so stamped addressed envelopes. Spokesworker also appears on our Internet web site - to be notified of such updates by email, contact spokesATspokes.org.uk.

FOR YOUR DIARY

SEE ALSO EVENTS LIST ON SPOKES WEBSITE

Feb 25 Smarter Choices 'infrastructure learning event'

www.pathsforall.org.uk/pfa/news/smarter-choices-smarter-places-learning-event.html

Mar 3-14 Schools Big Pedal – run by Sustrans. Get your school involved! See <http://bigpedal.org.uk/>.

Mar 11 CILT Cycling Forum – the work of the Forum, Richard Armitage. 1730 for 1800, City Chambers. www.ciltscotland.com/events.php

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

We have a new web page listing current Planning Applications or PANs relevant to cycling – possibly a potential cycle access or route connection, bike storage needed for residents, bike parking for visitors, etc. [PANs are a public consultation stage for big developments, prior to submitting a Planning Application]

Our new page also explains more about PAs and PANs, tells you how to look them up on the council website, or to find details of exhibitions, etc. You comment on *planning applications* direct to the council. For *PANs* there is normally an exhibition and you comment to the developer – they should take account of the consultation feedback in their subsequent planning application.

To find our web page go to spokes.org.uk : documents : local issues : current PAs. Or go direct to www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/current-pas-and-pans

For more information, contact Peter Hawkins, Spokes Planning Group, email peterhawkATphonecoop.coop.

Below are some important current proposals, also listed on our above web page. Please comment on any that concern you. We can't show all here: check our page now and weekly for others.

PAN CONSULTATION EXHIBITION DATES

For more details of the exhibitions go to our new web page, then look up the PAN on the council planning website.

Jan 29 at Novotel, Gyle Centre, 2-8pm [also **Jan 30** at Wester Hailes Educ Centre, 2-8pm]. **13/04911/PAN** "Edinburgh Garden District" huge residential development west of City Bypass. If built, need cycle accesses & routes through the site.

Feb 20, 4-8pm, Balerno Comm Centre 13/05039/PAN residential dev south of Cockburn Cres, Balerno Greenbelt site

Feb 20, 4-8pm and 22nd 10-4pm Marriott Hotel; Also unstaffed exhibition Feb 2- Mar 1 at Drumbrae Library. 13/05073/PAN residential dev, W Craigs Rd. Greenfield site, may be green belt.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

These are some current applications where you may wish to comment – go to our web page for more and how to comment. **The dates shown are closing date for comments...**

Jan 24 13/05165/FUL residential dev off Ratho Park Rd, Ratho Greenfield and Green Belt site. Canal footbridge shown only as "aspiration" should be included; towpath also badly needs upgrade.

Jan 31 13/05207/AMC new Boroughmuir High School Important proposal adjacent to canal and F'ountainbridge. Need good cycle route accesses, wider/upgraded canal path, Viewforth access, segregated link to Telfer Subway/North Ed Network, etc.

Feb 7 13/05221/FUL Former music library conversion to bistro Geo IV Bridge. Needs bike parking – or, perhaps such sites should be used for city-centre housing rather than building houses on greenbelt and creating yet more city-centre food/drink outlets.

BIKE SHEDS - Need to Know

As reported in Spokes 117 [and spokes.org.uk, 5.10.13] Edinburgh Council has approved our factsheet on front-garden sheds as "appropriate" advice and has put a link to it in their online planning advice [search for *Householder Guidance* at edinburgh.gov.uk].

Briefly, a front garden shed would "normally be expected" to be allowable if it meets 5 criteria covering positioning, size, colour, screening and liaison with neighbours. But do note the 'normally'!

Not all shed locations need planning permission – and in practice most people don't anyway apply [the cost is £192!]. The council is unlikely to bother you *unless* someone reports your shed – but then enforcement action may be taken and you may have to remove it.

We have met Planning officers to see how use of the factsheet is going. There haven't been many cases over the winter, but it is clear that many people who need to store bikes in front gardens remain unaware of the criteria likely to make a shed acceptable, and the council has issued several enforcement notices for shed removal. In 2 or 3 cases the shed stood out like a sore thumb due to size and/or colour and we had to agree it was unacceptable.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ♦ **If you or anyone you know is considering a front-garden bike shed, do ensure it meets the criteria, or that there are planning-relevant reasons to justify exceeding them.**
- ♦ If you have any queries about our factsheet, or have contacted the council, or have had any problems with front-garden sheds in the last few months, we'd like to hear from you.
- ♦ **The cost of planning permission [£192] is a big problem, equalling the cost of some sheds!** This could be resolved (for the whole of Scotland) if the Scottish Government would agree that sheds meeting certain criteria (such as in our factsheet) could count as 'permitted development' and so not need planning permission. MSPs **Alison Johnstone** and **Jim Eadie** are raising this – *please email them if this matters to you.*

SNIPPETS

WAVERLEY STATION BIKE HUB

Waverley Station is hoping to develop a Bike Hub, with secure parking, servicing, etc. Meantime there is now a **bike repair/service workshop** by Grease Monkey Cycles at the station fortnightly: Jan 22, Feb 5, Feb 19, Mar 5, etc [charged, not free?] *More info:* Joanna.Noble@networkrail.co.uk

SOLWAY TO FORTH TOURIST/LEISURE ROUTE

Last year we outlined this tourist route idea by Sustrans founder John Grimshaw [spokes.org.uk, 17.8.13 news]. There will be several route 'tester rides' this year, with luggage backup, accommodation, etc. One ride may include transport from Edinburgh to the starting point at Annan. If interested in taking part, please get in touch. The tester rides are not suitable for novice cyclists.

GLASGOW SPOKES CYCLE MAP - OFFER

We hope to publish a new edition this summer. Until then the current map is just £3 post-free from Spokes [orders by post only].

TREASURER

Our request for volunteers to become Spokes treasurer, following Rosemary Gray's long and excellent stint, was very successful with six or so people with financial skills getting in touch. The new treasurer is Paul Ritchie, whose experience as treasurer for several other environmental organisations fitted very well indeed.

CITY CENTRE ROUTE

The Evening News reported that Edinburgh plans a £10m city centre east-west Family Friendly Network cycle route (i.e. suitable for a 12-year old) from Roseburn through to Leith Walk.

www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/transport/10m-cycle-path-to-cut-through-heart-of-edinburgh-1-3267478

Whilst this is great news much of the article, including the £10m figure and the implication that plans are well advanced, was speculation not fact! The article was based on a leak, not an announcement, and we understand that the council is only just beginning to think about options for the route. The council is likely to bid to Sustrans for 14/15 match-funding for design and public consultation, but the cost of the route itself is unknown and no work is likely (apart from Leith Walk) until 15/16. Obviously a route through the city centre is going to involve a great deal of consultation and negotiation, with everyone from businesses to buses, followed by the legally-required Traffic Regulation Orders.

However if you like the general idea, tell your councillors that you have seen the Evening News article and you hope this will be implemented as soon as possible. One big unhappiness is that the initial route is shown using George St not Princes St.

MORE BIKE LANE CARS?

Despite disappointment that the 'Quality Bike Corridor' from Kings Buildings to Princes Street was not bolder, our survey last year found that most members who used it felt that it is at least an improvement on the situation before [spokes.org.uk 24.4.13 news].

The biggest complaint was about cars stopped in cycle lanes – sometimes legally and often illegally. But now, following strong complaints by shops, **the Council proposes allowing vehicles to stop for loading in part of Mayfield Rd cycle lane at offpeak times, replacing the current prohibition on loading at any time.** This would apply to the short stretch of cycle lane angling back to the kerb near the junction, after passing the existing parking bays.

This is unacceptable, and even more so at this point next to the West Saville Terrace junction which was the site of several cycling casualties before the cycle lanes and ASLs were installed.

The proposal also conflicts with policies Park13 and Park14 of the new Local Transport Strategy [see *Transport Strategy* article].

The Traffic Regulation Order [TRO] is at edinburgh.gov.uk : transport : traffic orders, which also tells you how to object to TROs – or see below. **Objections close on January 31.**

The relevant order is TRO/13/32. Note that the Order also includes changes at Ratcliffe Terrace – we do not object to these, since the cycle lane will be extended past a new parking space. Confusingly, the Order is just called Ratcliffe Terrace on the web page, but nonetheless it does also cover the Mayfield Road change.

Email your objection to trafficorders@edinburgh.gov.uk **quoting TRO/13/32, Ratcliffe Ter Order, and your name and address.** If you agree with us, say that you are objecting only to the Mayfield Road proposal, not Ratcliffe Terrace.

If you are short of time it is not essential to read through the documents. However, if you wish to look at the plans, download the document called '**Ratcliffe Terrace Plan**' – the Mayfield Road proposal is in that document as Appendix 2.

TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Edinburgh Council has approved its 2014-2019 **Local Transport Strategy** [LTS], setting out the policy framework for all transport decisions over the next 5 years.

Biggest change is the new 20mph policy, which received high public support after a major consultation. Under this policy the city plans 20mph not just for residential areas but also **shopping areas and main roads with significant pedestrian or cyclist use.** Consultation on a proposed 20mph city network is expected this summer, with implementation complete by April 2017. One consequence will surely be that **Leith Walk** will become 20mph – it is a main road but has high walking and cycling use and is a shopping and residential area – thus meeting every criterion, much more than is needed to fit the new policy.

For more info and background, see our 9 Jan website article. Below are the LTS policy statements on cycling [from section 9.2 of the LTS]. **These are now official council policy statements, so are useful to quote when commenting on road or traffic schemes.**

[Chapter 9] Cycling Objective: To ensure that cycling is an attractive, safe, secure option for all short and medium journeys.

PCycle1 : All new traffic management and/or road schemes will be designed in accordance with the Council's emerging Street Design Guidance (currently, the Cycle Friendly Design Guide).

PCycle2 : There will be a presumption in favour of new traffic management schemes always incorporating measures for cyclists, particularly:

- exemptions from road closures;
- advanced stop lines (ASLs) with approach cycle lanes at signal-controlled junctions, or cycle lanes where ASLs not required;
- new pedestrian crossings to be considered as potential toucans;
- cycle lanes, or where appropriate physically segregated cycle infrastructure, in all schemes involving main roads (except where this may not be necessary if the speed limit is 20mph).

PCycle3 : There will be a presumption that all streets will be two way. However, if new one-way streets have to be implemented to manage motor traffic, there will be a presumption that cyclists will be exempted from the one-way restriction.

PCycle4 : There will be a presumption against constructing any new roundabouts with more than one entry, exit or circulating lane within the built-up area.

PCycle5 : When traffic management or other schemes involve significant works to roundabout junctions, there will be a presumption in favour of replacing the roundabouts (other than 'mini' roundabouts) with traffic signals.

PCycle6 : The Council supports the carriage of bicycles on rail services, with sufficient numbers per train to allow family groups to travel together. Subject to successful piloting, the Council will support carriage of cycles at appropriate times on the Edinburgh Tram. It also supports bike carriage on medium to long distance bus/coach services and supports the carrying of folding bicycles on all modes of public transport.

PCycle7 : Cycle/pedestrian routes will be retained on former railway routes used by the Tram. Safe provision for cyclists will be made on streets used by Tram; and secure cycle parking facilities will be provided near Tram stops.

PCycle8 : The Council's approach to situations where a shared footway is an option will be as follows:

- a) shared footways will only be considered where they are necessary to provide cyclists with a reasonably safe route separated from busy traffic and they form a component in a longer cycle route;

Taking into account cost implications, impacts on other road users, and potential benefits:

- b) where space is available provision of a cycle track physically divided (segregated) from both motor traffic and pedestrians will be considered (a segregated cycleway);
- c) If a segregated cycleway cannot be provided then the usual preference will be for cyclists to be separated from pedestrians on a shared footway by a white line, difference in materials, or similar. However, this will not always be the preferred solution, for example, when pedestrian use is low and width is limited it may be better not to segregate; and
- d) all new and existing shared footways will be equipped with 'courtesy' signs encouraging considerate user behaviour.

PCycle9 : In the event of a private investor bringing forward proposals in line with the Council's central objectives, the Council would support a pedal / electric bike share scheme in the city.

ECycle 1 : There will be a presumption that electric cycle will be afforded identical treatment to pedal cycles.

Policies elsewhere in the LTS mentioning cyclists include the following [there are more]...

Park13 : There will be a presumption in favour of protecting all bus and cycle lanes, and pedestrian and/or cycle crossing points by appropriate parking and loading restrictions.

Park14: The Council will only relax parking/loading restrictions if such relaxation will not have a significant negative impact on pedestrians, cyclists or flow or safety of buses and other traffic.